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Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Security Council calls on Bosnian and Croatian Governments to remove all restrictions on Rapid Reaction Force.

* Three United States officials killed in road accident outside Sarajevo; Secretary-General says quest for peace will continue unabated despite tragedy.

* Liberian faction leaders conclude Agreement on cease-fire and establishment of Council of State.

* Secretary-General condemns terrorist bus bombing in Jerusalem; expresses hope parties will remain committed to implementing Declaration of Principles.

* Secretary-General leaves New York for four-day visit to Portugal in connection with fiftieth anniversary of United Nations.

* As Zaire begins expelling Rwandan refugees, UNHCR says any repatriation must be truly voluntary.

* Security Council Committee invites Hungary to suspend deliveries of natural gas across border with Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

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The Security Council has called on the Bosnian and Croatian Governments to remove all impediments to the freedom of movement and provision of facilities for the Rapid Reaction Force (RRF). The RRF was established on 16 June to reinforce the United Nations Peace Forces (UNPF)/United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR).

In a statement by its President, Nugroho Wisnumurti (Indonesia), on Saturday, the Council called on the two Governments to resolve any outstanding difficulties with United Nations authorities, within the framework of the existing Status of Forces Agreements. It agreed with the Secretary-General's view that the existing Agreements were sufficient basis for the presence of an expanded UNPF/UNPROFOR, including the RRF.

(more)

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Despite the Council's statement, the Rapid Reaction Force continued to experience difficulties over the weekend, according to a United Nations spokesman. He noted that a French artillery unit had been blocked at a Bosnian Croat check-point for six hours.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has expressed deep sorrow at the deaths of three United States officials in an accident outside Sarajevo on Saturday. The Secretary-General extended his condolences to the Government of the United States and the families of the three men. He expressed confidence that the quest for peace in the former Yugoslavia would continue unabated in spite of the tragedy.

The three officials -- Special Envoy Robert Frasure, Deputy Defense Secretary Joseph Kruzel and National Security Council aide Colonel Samuel Nelson Drew -- were killed when the armoured personnel carrier in which they were travelling plunged off the Mount Igman road and caught fire. A French peace-keeper was also killed in the accident.

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Liberian faction leaders meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, yesterday concluded an Agreement calling for a cease-fire to begin at midnight on 26 August and for the establishment of a Council of State on 2 September. The Agreement was negotiated under the auspices of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

The Secretary-General welcomed the Agreement as an important step on the road to peace in Liberia, and called on all the Liberian parties to fully implement it. Such action would send the strongest possible to the Liberian people and the international community that the parties were ready for peace.

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Mr. Boutros-Ghali strongly condemned the terrorist attack against two buses in Jerusalem today, and extended condolences to the families of the victims. He expressed the hope that, despite the outrageous incident, the parties would remain undeterred in their negotiations to implement in full the Declaration of Principles of September 1993.

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The Secretary-General will leave New York later today for a four-day official visit to Portugal, in connection with that country's commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. He will have meetings with the Portuguese President, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, as well as with the Mayor of Lisbon.

(more)

On Thursday, the Secretary-General will open the sixty-seventh session of the Institute of International Law at the Classic University of Lisbon. The following day, he will attend a special Parliamentary celebration of the Organization's fiftieth anniversary. He will return to Headquarters next Monday.

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Zaire has begun expelling Rwandan refugees from its territory, transporting them by bus to the border with Rwanda, according to a United Nations spokesman. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) tried to stop the repatriation until it could ascertain that it was voluntary and that the Government of Rwanda was prepared to accept the refugees.

The UNHCR established that the Rwandan Government was processing and registering the refugees, and that it would allow the agency access to them. The High Commissioner reiterated that it supported a truly voluntary repatriation of the refugees.

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The Security Council Committee established by resolution 724 (1991) has invited the Government of Hungary to suspend natural gas supplies at the Hungarian-Yugoslav border until agreements on the unhindered supply of gas to all users are reached and adequate guarantees provided. The Committee took that action after being informed by the Bosnian Government of disruptions and, since May, a total halting by Bosnian Serbs of gas supplies to Sarajevo from the Russian Federation through Hungary and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

The Committee also approved two requests by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) regarding the flow of refugees from Croatia to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and Serb-controlled areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It authorized the transportation of humanitarian supplies by air from Belgrade, if necessary, to refugees on the move. It also authorized a shipment of fuel to Belgrade for increased UNHCR activities in the region.

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